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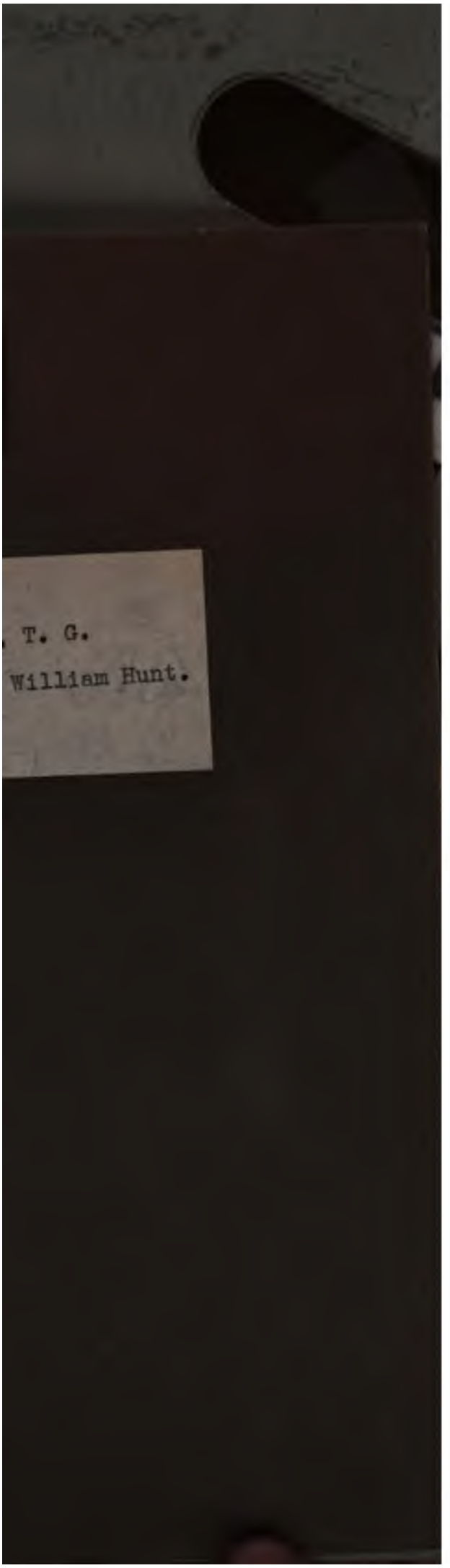
T. G.
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Wm Hunt

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM HUNT, M.D.

BY

THOMAS G. MORTON, M.D.

From the
Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.
1897.

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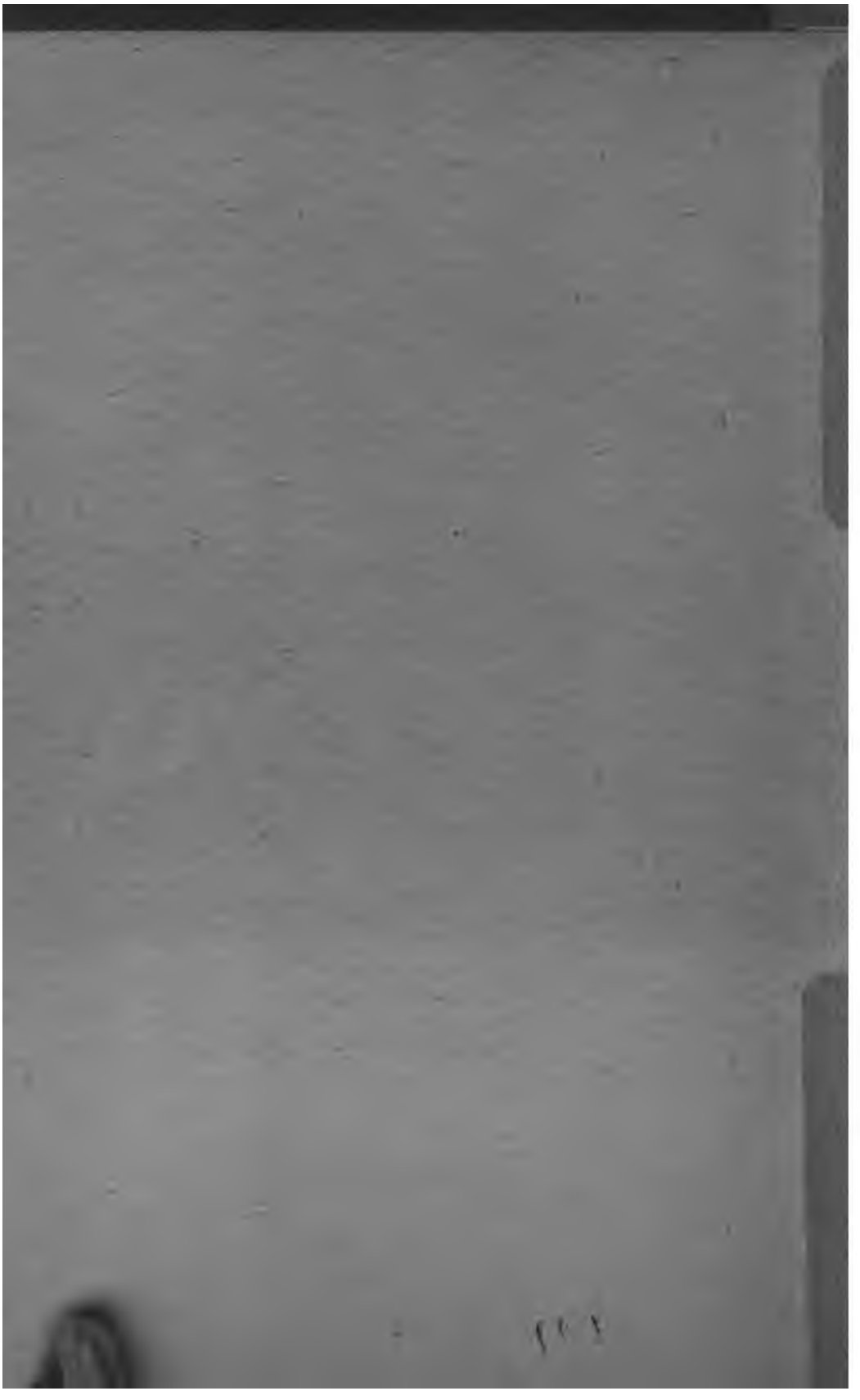

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MEMOIR OF WILLIAM HUNT, M.D.

By THOMAS G. MORTON, M.D.

[Read February 3, 1897.]

In former times it was the custom, much more so than it is at present, for students, while attending lectures at medical schools in Philadelphia, to join one of the so-called "quiz" classes, which would assemble at some convenient place where examinations would be held upon the lectures of the day.

Many years ago, I was invited by a friend and fellow-student to accompany him to one of these exercises, which happened to be on anatomy. I did not know the quiz-master personally, who he was, or even his name; but his pleasant and kindly manners, together with the great interest he appeared to take in the individual members of the class, attracted me, and before the hour was over I resolved to become a member of the class. I did so, and thus began my acquaintance with William Hunt. Our acquaintance gradually ripened into friendship and this into genuine regard, affection, and love. This relation between Dr. Hunt and myself, so happily inaugurated, continued without the slightest interruption until his death, in 1896, a period of more than forty years.

It is, therefore, to me a source of more than gratification that the College of Physicians and the Academy of Surgery have invited me to prepare a memorial of our late fellow-member, with whom I had been so pleasantly and constantly associated during, I may say, my entire professional life.

William Hunt, the son of Uriah and Elizabeth Shreve Hunt, was born September 26, 1825, at No. 106 North Fourth Street, Philadelphia. He was descended from a long line of Friends (Quakers), his great-grandfather, William, having been widely

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known as a preacher, both throughout this country and abroad, during the early half of the last century. The family first came to America about 1680. Dr. Hunt's great-great-grandfather, with his four sons, came from Scotland and settled in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, whence they emigrated to North Carolina. In 1815, Uriah Hunt left North Carolina to make his home in Philadelphia, where, as he says, he found that at that time "there were not twelve of the name in the *Directory*." He established himself as a publisher, especially of religious works and text-books for schools, and became a successful business man. He was a highly respected member of the Society of Friends all his life.

Dr. Hunt's mother was a daughter of Caleb and Margaret Donaldson, and a granddaughter of Arthur Donaldson, of Revolutionary fame. William Hunt, by descent a member of the Orthodox branch of the Society of Friends, was disowned in 1843 because he acted as groomsman at his sister's wedding, when the latter was married to a member of the Hicksite branch of the Society. He married, on June 3, 1856, at No. 185 (now 515) Arch Street, Rebecca T., daughter of Richard and Lydia Williams Price, and at once commenced practice at his residence on Arch Street below Fifth (then No. 143). They had two sons, William, Jr., and George Wood, both of whom survive him, and one daughter, Margaret Price; the early death of the latter, in 1872, was a great grief to the parents.

Dr. Hunt's early education was received at the Friends' Select School, but on account of delicate health at that time he was unable to enter college. He completed his education under home instruction, after which he entered his father's publishing house, on Fourth Street below Arch, where he remained one year. As mercantile life was utterly distasteful to him, his business career was brief. His father finally yielded to his earnest desire to devote his life to medicine. He accordingly entered the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, and was graduated in the class of 1849, during which time he was a student in the office of Dr. George B. Wood. His thesis was upon the "Treatment of Aneurism."

Immediately upon receiving his degree, he was appointed as substitute for Dr. Spencer Sergeant, who was then a resident physician at the Pennsylvania Hospital. While still acting as substitute, he was elected to succeed Dr. Sergeant, whose illness had proved fatal. It was during his two years' term of service at the hospital in this capacity that he had a severe attack of typhoid fever, and he frequently stated that his was the only case then on record of recovery after a perforation of the intestine. Dr. George B. Wood, in referring to Dr. Hunt's illness, wrote that during the course of the disease he "was suddenly attacked with violent pain in the right iliac region, extending over the right side of the abdomen, with great distention, exquisite tenderness on pressure, and extreme frequency of the pulse. It was the opinion of Dr. Gerhard, who was the attending physician, and my own, that perforation had taken place."[1]

Dr. Hunt, in one of his clinical lectures, incidentally alluded to his own case, using the following words: "While a resident physician in 1850, in the Pennsylvania Hospital, I had an attack of typhoid fever, which became historic and was a theme for medical lecturers in their clinics for many years. I had, according to the opinions of most distinguished attendants (Drs. Wood, Gerhard, and the elder Pepper), every symptom of having perforation of the bowels. The accident was made out completely, but I treated science so disrespectfully as to get well, and so gave no opportunity to confirm the diagnosis."[2]

Dr. Hunt became Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy in the University of Pennsylvania, under the late Joseph Leidy, and, upon the latter being made Professor of Anatomy, Dr. Hunt was appointed Demonstrator in 1854, a position he held for ten years. The warm friendship and intimacy between Prof. Leidy and Dr. Hunt were terminated only by the death of the former. It was most fittingly commemorated by Dr. Hunt's two addresses, one upon the "Personal History" and the other upon the "University Career" of Dr. Leidy, the former being delivered before the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, May 12, 1891,

[1] G. B. Wood's Practice of Medicine, vol. i. p. 393, Phila., 1866.

[2] Clinical lecture on "Injuries to the Spine," Nov. 1881, Medical News and Abstract.

the latter before the alumni and students of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, on November 17, 1891.

During two of the years of Dr. Hunt's demonstratorship, I was his assistant in the dissecting-rooms. After the work in the rooms was concluded, each night, Dr. Hunt and I would adjourn to a neighboring German restaurant and spend half an hour in social chat on matters of mutual interest, both professional and personal. I now look back upon that period as a most enjoyable part of my professional life.

Dr. Hunt was elected to the surgical staff of the Episcopal Hospital in 1853, upon which he served ten years. During part of this period (from 1857) he also served at Wills Hospital for the Indigent Lame and Blind. He resigned from both the Episcopal and Wills Hospitals upon his election to the staff of the Pennsylvania Hospital, as one of the attending surgeons, in September, 1863. In the latter position he served continuously for thirty years, becoming Senior Surgeon of the staff upon the death of Dr. George W. Norris, in March, 1875.

Among the seventy-two names upon the list of members of the Medical and Surgical Staff of the Pennsylvania Hospital, from its organization in 1750 to the present day, a period of nearly a century and a half, there occur only three whose term of service was longer than Dr. Hunt's—Dr. Thomas Bond served thirty-two years; Dr. Thomas Parke, forty-five years; and my own record, which is thirty-three years this month.

It was formerly the custom of the surgeons of the hospital to go on duty, in rotation, for three months each year. Believing it better for the surgical work to have a more continuous service, Dr. Hunt suggested changing the period to six consecutive months, two of the surgeons being on duty at a time—a plan which was adopted about 1870 and has been since continued. Dr. Hunt was also Consulting Surgeon of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and attending Surgeon to the Orthopædic Hospital. From the latter he resigned in the fall of 1889. He was appointed one of the Governors of the Gynecean Hospital of Philadelphia in 1889.

Dr. Hunt became a member of the American Medical Associa-

tion in 1852 and a Fellow of the College of Physicians in 1854. He was elected a member of the Museum Committee in 1857 and Curator in 1858; in 1863 he was made a member of the Mütter Museum Committee, temporary Curator in 1874, and Chairman from 1879 to 1895. He became a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia in 1855, and of the Philadelphia County Medical Society in 1876; a Fellow of the Philadelphia Academy of Surgery in 1879, and its President from January, 1891, to January, 1895. On his retirement from office, the thanks of the Academy were tendered him for his faithful and valued service and his considerate and courteous performance of his duties as presiding officer. He was a Trustee of the University of Pennsylvania from 1879 to 1895, and he was elected an Honorary Member of the American Surgical Association in 1882. He was also a Director of the Philadelphia Contributionship, a fire insurance association, from 1882 to 1895. He was elected a member of the Society of the Sons of the Revolution in 1890. In the records of that society it is noted that he was a great-grandson of Arthur Donaldson, who was engineer in charge of the defences of the Delaware River during the Revolutionary War.

Dr. Hunt was one of the original incorporators of the Microscopical and Biological Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences, and in its early days was one of the most active members. He was also a member of the Alumni Society of the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and of other organizations. He was one of the original members of the former Biological Club of this city, which merits a few words in digression.

The "Biological Club" was a social organization formed among the members of the Academy of Natural Sciences about 1859, during the time of activity in the biological section. The meetings of the club were held in rotation at the residences of the members, and were very informal, and, at first, the refreshments were crackers and cheese, and ale. The rigid sumptuary laws of the early days, however, did not last; the simple fare expanded into a supper, to be succeeded about 1870 by a dinner. For over thirty years the club continued to meet regularly, without the loss

of a member, thirteen members being generally present. It finally dissolved, principally owing to losses by death.

Dr. Hunt was also one of the original members of the "Surgical Club," which was organized in 1877 by a few Philadelphia surgeons, among whom were Agnew, the two Grosses—father and son—Levis, Maury, and Reed, and no additions were ever made to the original membership. It was designed as a semi-social scientific association, meeting twice a month at the members' houses, when interesting cases were presented and informally discussed. Following this there were simple refreshments and social intercourse. Two years later, in 1879, when its members formed the present Philadelphia Academy of Surgery, the "Surgical Club" was made entirely a social organization. The surviving members continue to meet occasionally during the winter season to dine together.

Dr. Hunt was eminently social in his disposition and was always a welcome guest at the Wistar and other parties, and on less formal occasions among his professional friends. But the one entertainment which gave him probably the greatest pleasure was the "Sylvester Eve" gathering each year at the home of Dr. Albert Fricke. These were charming evenings, quite unique and ever to be remembered, where wit and genial humor prevailed, and to be noted as extraordinary in their bountiful hospitality.

At the close of each year the same chosen few assembled to bid adieu to the old year and to welcome the new. From time to time a vacant place was noticed, and, among those missed during recent years, there was none whose absence was more sincerely regretted than Seidensticker, Leidy, and Hunt. Dr. Hunt was present on the eve of the new year of 1895, and this occasion was the last time that he was an evening absent from his home.

Dr. Hunt was appointed an Acting Assistant Surgeon of the United States Army, May 16, 1862, serving until October 31, 1863, when, as shown by the records of the War Office at Washington, his contract terminated. He had been previously detailed by Surgeon-General Henry H. Smith, of the Pennsylvania Volunteer Service, for duty at St. Joseph's Hospital, Philadelphia, April 18, 1862, in caring for the wounded soldiers.

In December, 1862, Dr. Hunt wrote to the Sanitary Commission expressing his willingness to "co-operate in its examination into the condition and wants of the United States Military Hospitals," and under date of March 30, 1863, his proposition was accepted and he was directed to make a tour of the service. He was consequently appointed a "Special Inspector of the General Hospitals of the Army," and in that capacity was entitled to all the benefits of the order of the Secretary of War, dated June 13, 1861, directing and enjoining all persons in the employment of the United States forces to respect and further the inquiries and objects of this commission to the utmost of their ability. His commission received the indorsement of the Surgeon-General of the United States Army. Dr. Hunt was instructed to report on April 15th, at New Haven, Connecticut, to inspect the general hospitals at that place, and thence, successively and in the order most convenient, to examine the army hospitals at Newport, Portsmouth Grove, Boston, Massachusetts; Brattleboro and Burlington, Vermont, for the remainder of the month, concluding with the direction to visit and examine in a general way the hospitals at Newark, N. J. He was on duty in active service at Frederick City, Maryland, from September 21st to 26th. On the latter date he was ordered back to Philadelphia to assume the duties of Acting Assistant Surgeon at the Fifth and Buttonwood Street United States Army Hospital. On October 14, 1862, he was relieved from duty at this hospital and assigned to duty at the new hospital for wounded officers at Camac's Woods, Philadelphia (now Eleventh and Norris Streets). It was during this service that Dr. Hunt's contention that it is not the duty of physicians, serving in hospitals on contract, to attend sick and wounded officers out of hospitals, without compensation, was upheld by the Surgeon-General of the United States Army, in a communication dated October 7, 1862.

Many of the wounded officers rested in Philadelphia for treatment, *en route* to their respective homes, and it was at the house of Morris L. Hallowell, No. 912 Walnut Street, who for this purpose generously gave up his own private dwelling (called by Oliver Wendell Holmes the "House Beautiful"), that Dr. Hunt and Dr. Thomas G. Morton attended Colonel Norwood Penrose Hallowell,

Colonel Edward Needles Hallowell, Colonel Francis W. Palfrey, Captain Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (now Judge Holmes, of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts), and many others, all officers in the army. In a characteristic punning letter to Dr. Hunt, Dr. Holmes afterward acknowledged the services to his son with "Good-by, my kind friend and my son's friend, whom I have delicately commemorated in my 'Hunt after the Captain.'" Later, as a further evidence of appreciation, he sent him author's copies of all his works published to that date, May, 1863.

Dr. Hunt for a number of years was one of the editorial staff of the *Annual of the Universal Medical Sciences*, still published in this city, and was also a rare but highly esteemed contributor to the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*. In the *Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia* are several communications from the pen of Dr. Hunt. Among the special articles of which he was the author may be mentioned "A Memoir of George W. Norris, M.D., Vice-President of the College of Physicians, etc., 1876;" "Popular Fallacies about Surgery," *Lippincott's Magazine*, December, 1881; "The Rights of a Consultant to Compensation," *Medical News*, December 15, 1888; "Diabetic Gangrene," *Transactions of the Philadelphia County Medical Society*, November 28, 1888.

In reference to the paper on "Diabetic Gangrene" it may be stated that Dr. John S. Billings, in acknowledging, under date of February 1, 1889, a copy which had been sent to the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, Washington, wrote: "I have read the paper with much interest. I know of no other American paper on the subject." He also edited Wilson's *Dissector's Manual* in 1858, and in conjunction with Dr. Thomas G. Morton compiled a *History of Surgery in the Pennsylvania Hospital*, 1880.[1]

[1] The titles of all the articles contributed by Dr. Hunt to medical literature, etc., as far as can be ascertained are as follows:

"On Phosphorus Necrosis," American Journal Med. Sciences, vol. xlix., 1865.

"On Ossification of the Crystalline Lens," American Journal Med. Sciences, vol. xlviii., 1865.

"Death from Hemorrhage, Caused by a Sharp Sequestrum Cutting the Popliteal Artery," American Journal Med. Sciences, vol. l., 1865.

"Case of Coexistence of Tetanus and Paralysis," American Journal Med. Sciences, New Series, vol. xlv., 1863.

"On Fractures of the Larynx and Ruptures of the Trachea," American Journal Med. Sciences, Article IX., April, 1866.

Some thirty years ago, when it was decided to publish the *Pennsylvania Hospital Reports*, Dr. Hunt, with Dr. J. M. Da Costa, undertook the labor of editing them, and he contributed personally several clinical papers to the volumes published in 1868 and 1869, when the series was discontinued. He also contributed articles to the *International Encyclopædia of Surgery* and assisted in preparing the American edition of Holmes's *System of Surgery*. His interest in general medicine and in science was shown by his membership in the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (being one of the incorporators of the Microscopical Section of this

"Physiological Observations and Experiments on a Case of Large Artificial Anus, with an Account of the Surgical and Mechanical Efforts to Cure." Penn. Hosp. Reports, vol. I., 1868.

"A Contribution to the History of Toxæmia," Penn. Hosp. Reports, vol. I., 1868.

"Fatal Chorea. Death Consequent on the Aggravation Caused by a Simple Fracture of the Humerus," Penn. Hosp. Reports, vol. ii., 1869.

"Extracts from Clinical Lectures," Penn. Hosp Reports, vol. ii., 1869.

"The (Morton) Ward Carriage," Penn. Hosp. Reports, vol. ii , 1869.

"Traumatic Rupture of the Urethra," Philadelphia Med. Times, 1871.

"Unusual Surgical Cases," Philadelphia Med. Times, 1872.

"Clinical Notes and Reflections," Philadelphia Med. Times, 1875.

"A Memoir of George W. Norris, M.D.," Transactions College of Physicians, 1876.

"On Inequality in Length of the Lower Limbs, etc.," American Journal of Med. Sciences, January, 1879

"Letter on the Case of President Garfield," Med. News and Abstract, November, 1881.

"Clinical Lecture on Injuries of the Spine," Med. News and Abstract, November, 1881.

"Popular Fallacies about Surgery," Lippincott's Magazine, December, 1881.

"Fœtal Burns during Advanced Pregnancy, the Burns of the Mother apparently impressing themselves on the Child *in utero*," American Journal Med. Sciences, January, 1881.

"Esmarch: Antisepsis and Bacillus," Medical News, January, 1883.

"Discoveries in Regard to Bacilli," Medical News, 1884.

"The Rights of a Consultant to Compensation," Medical News, 1888.

"Diabetic Gangrene," Trans. Philadelphia County Med. Society, November, 1888.

"Health Gymnastics at Baden-Baden," Philadelphia, 1888

"Vesical, Urethral, and Preputial Calculi," in Keating's Cyclopædia of the Diseases of Children, vol. iii. p. 596. Philadelphia, 1890.

"In Memoriam: Dr. Joseph Leidy, Personal History," read at the Academy of Natural Sciences, May 12, 1891.

"An Address upon the late Joseph Leidy, M.D., LL.D., His University Career," read before the Alumni and Students of the University of Pennsylvania (Medical Department), November 17, 1891.

"Address before the Graduating Class of Nurses, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem," 1893.

"Cystic Growth within the Internal Condyle of the Femur," Transactions of the American Surgical Association. [By Drs. Morton and Hunt]

In Holmes' System of Surgery, first American from second English Edition, Philadelphia, 1881, Dr. Hunt revised the following articles: "Erysipelas," Campbell D. Morgan, F.R.S.; "Pyæmia," George W. Callender, Esq.

To the International Encyclopædia of Surgery, vol. I., New York, 1886, Dr. Hunt contributed the article on "Traumatic Delirium and Delirium Tremens"

Dr Hunt, with Dr. Morton, prepared the articles on "Orthopædic Surgery," for series 1888 and 1889 of the Annual of the Universal Medical Sciences, edited by Dr. Sajous, Philadelphia.

organization), and also by his membership in the American Medical Association, to which he was elected a delegate from the College of Physicians on five different occasions.

During the period of painful suspense that followed the wounding of President Garfield and the controversies, in which both medical and lay press joined, with regard to the proper management of gunshot-injuries of the vertebræ, and the criticism of the actual methods adopted by the physicians in charge of the distinguished patient, were engaging the attention of surgeons all over the world, Dr. Hunt, aroused especially by what he considered to be some very unjust aspersions upon the attendants on the case by a noted German surgeon, wrote several articles in defence of American surgery, which were widely published. It was in connection with this subject that Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote to Dr. Hunt, and, as the letter is written in the characteristic style of the Philosopher of the Breakfast-table, I will take the liberty of introducing it here, the more willingly because it contains some autobiographical references which should not be lost:

BOSTON, November 18, 1881.

"DEAR DR. HUNT: I received *Lippincott* (which I intended to have bought, of course) this day, and sat down at once and read your article in it. I was greatly interested in it, as all medical and semi-medical readers must certainly be. I think the average reader of the *Atlantic*, who is more literary than scientific, would consider it rather professional for that magazine.

"I am pleased to say that I have also found, this same day, in a pile of pamphlets, which came on me like an avalanche, "On Injuries of the Spine" and "Correspondence," which you were kind enough to send me with your regards. I believe that I told you that I had until within a few days been very busy with my memoranda for the *Memorial History of Boston*. I got off my second revise yesterday, so that I could sit down in peace and read both your articles deliberately, which I did after finishing the one in *Lippincott*. I could not help being interested in these, as you may well suppose. Your theory or argument relating to the part played by the sympathetic in injuries to the bones on which

the chain of ganglions lie seems to me entirely reasonable. It is just what ought to have been thought of, but I think you have the merit of first suggesting it.

"Your letter about President Garfield's case is excellent and will be most acceptable to the profession, I have no doubt. I read every word of it with great pleasure, agreeing with all you said.

"I am an outsider in every point of view, and I have not forgotten the Dutch saying, of which, in fact, I am rather fond—'The man on the dike bowls well.' But I cannot help remembering some of my own oracular dicta delivered from the domestic tripod, two of which are called to mind by your pages. In the early days of the President's wound I, too, said and repeated until it bored the household, 'whereof he languished, and languishing did die.' I, too, suggested to my fireside audience that the thoracic duct might have been injured, which would account for the great emaciation. (I remembered the case of Calvin Edson, the living skeleton.)

"I, also, sitting on the dike, proposed to fitting, not promiscuous hearers, the enemata of defibrinated blood, which a day or two afterward I saw had been administered. So you see what a doctor was lost when I took to writing verses and stories.

"But let me close my letter by thanking you, most sincerely and heartily, for the great pleasure and the abundant instruction which your most valuable papers have afforded me. Believe me, dear Dr. Hunt, Faithfully yours,

"O. W. Holmes."

In connection with the same subject I have also found, among the private papers of our late Fellow, several very interesting letters (which, like the preceding, have never been published) from our former President, Dr. D. Hayes Agnew, one of which contains certain comments upon the wound of President Garfield and upon the pathology of this class of injuries, and especially upon the influence of the psoas magnus muscle in concealing gunshot-wounds of the lumbar vertebræ, which really constitutes a practical contribution to the literature of this department of surgery.

Dr. Agnew writes:

"AUGUST 23, 1881.

"MY DEAR HUNT: The (President's) case is a very plain one and demands no unusual skill to manage, as you well understand. It was a grave injury at the start, and continues to be so, and, while by no means hopeless, the result, in my judgment, is very doubtful. The popular mind cannot, of course, understand, what is so clear to you and me, that even though a bullet may not enter the serous cavity of the chest or abdomen, yet in traversing the line of both of these cavities outside of the pleura and peritoneum immense damage may be done. The track of the ball has been traced from the point of entrance behind the eleventh rib through the loin and forward beyond the anterior border of the iliac fossa; this would make a distance of at least sixteen inches. The simple state of things is this: that, at the time the first operation was performed, when rigors, sweating, and high temperature occurred, the President became septicæmic, and all the phenomena since have been due to this. There is no evidence, however, of any metastatic abscesses, no chest symptoms, and no kidney trouble, and consequently he may, possibly, weather it yet."

"OCTOBER 8, 1881.

"DEAR DR. HUNT: There are but two points which I think you have omitted, which have any material bearing on the subject.

"First. The influence of the psoas magnus in concealing shot-wounds of the lumbar vertebræ, at least wounds of entrance.

"Second. The thoroughness of the drainage secured by properly planned incisions.

"You are right in regard to no exploration having been made by the consulting surgeons on being called to Washington two days after the shooting, although Bliss, in his slipshod article in the *Record*, says such explorations were made. You are right, also, in stating that the nervous symptoms were chiefly in the right limb and altogether on the right side of the scrotum. I may also say that the early disappearance of these symptoms; the absence of any loss of power in the lower extremities; the general direction of all instruments used in explorations of the wound, for washing, being downward; the appearance of a well-defined ecchymosis over the abdominal parietes a few days after the acci-

dent, above the anterior superior spinous process of the ileum, with corresponding tenderness to pressure, and the tingling of the left scrotum favored the opinion that the ball might be in the walls of the abdomen in the above locality, though, as I said to you before, I never pretended to know where the ball was. There was no psoas abscess. The opening in vertebræ was not discovered until the psoas muscle was laid open. Your friend truly,

"D. HAYES AGNEW."

With regard to a disputed point in the published account of the case, Dr. Agnew confirmed Dr. Hunt's statement in the following letter:

"DECEMBER 5, 1882.

"DEAR DR. HUNT: You are right; no examination was made by the consulting surgeons at the time of their visit. They were informed that careful explorations had been made at the time of the shooting by Bliss and by Wales. Bliss admits that he committed an error on this point, writing, as he did, in New York and without any notes to refer to.

"I have examined all accessible sources and find no case of perforating shot-wound of the vertebræ which did not prove fatal, and I think you may challenge Esmarch to produce from the records of surgery a case of recovery in which this injury was positively determined. Remember and draw a distinction between perforating and all other shot-injuries of the spine. Indeed, few of any degree recover. Your friend truly,

"D. HAYES AGNEW."

If we recall the time when this celebrated case was the general topic for discussion among surgeons, we may better understand how Dr. Hunt was led to enter the lists both by his patriotic desire to uphold the credit of American surgery and by loyalty to his friend Agnew, whom he considered to be held up to censure in a clinical lecture in which Prof. Esmarch had reviewed and sharply criticised the treatment of the distinguished patient by his medical attendants.

When the closure of the lying-in wards of the Pennsylvania

Hospital was under discussion, the assertion was unjustly made in a medical journal that the cause of this action was the great prevalence of puerperal fever, which had been attended by unusual mortality, in this institution. Dr. Hunt wrote a letter to Prof. S. D. Gross upon this subject, which well illustrates his ability as a writer and his skill in presenting the facts and argument in as few words as possible and keeping directly to the point. With his published communication on "Hospitalism" it forms a really valuable addition to the controversy upon the relation of puerperal fever to infection.

About the same time that this letter was written Dr. Hunt had published a communication in the *Philadelphia Medical Times* on the subject of "Hospitalism," defending the institution with which he had been prominently connected for many years from the sweeping charges of maladministration made by an essayist belonging to the Public Health Association. (This also appears in *Surgery in the Pennsylvania Hospital*, p. 342 *et seq.*)

Dr. Hunt's contributions to medical literature show that his writings were never prepared in an egotistic spirit, to bring himself or his views into prominence, but were always inspired with a desire to refute error or to advance the cause of science. Dr. Hunt's sense of humor was very keen and he was fond of repartee, clever jests, and witticisms, this being shown by his writings as well as his daily conversation. An illustration of his appreciation of the ridiculous aspect of even serious questions is afforded by the following unsigned communication which he sent to the editor of the *Medical News*:

"MAGDEBURG, January 31, 1884.

"*To the Editor of The Medical News:*

"SIR: I have thought that some account of the recent discoveries in regard to bacilli might interest readers who are remote from the great radiating centres of constructive science. The latest of these discoveries is even yet spoken of here with caution; but by the time you have printed this it will have revolutionized one branch of physiology and produced an evolution of novel ideas, the final results of which not the boldest can predict. But before outlining for your readers a discovery which I am privileged to

communicate by permission of Prof. Coccischlächter, and before it has been fully published at home, it may be well to describe the Krankheitenursprungsanstalt's Museum of Bacilli collected by the Herr Ober-Professor Keimerzeuger von Verdammt-Narrburg.

"This has been done at the cost of more than one life upon the altar of science. The museum is a room about thirty feet square, with double walls of glass, between which circulates water kept at a temperature of 30° C. by three gigantic thermostats, which are so accurate that the heat does not vary the one-fiftieth of a degree. Ranged along the sides, exposed to air or under glasses, are hundreds of half-potatoes on which grow various bacilli; of late, however, boiled cabbage is said by Keimerzeuger to answer better. Certain specific cocci flourish on the *Beta altissima* or mangel-wurzel, but as to this choice of cultur-gartens more is to be said. To walk through this museum with the Herr Professor Keimerzeuger is interesting. Before entering a mask is given you and a bottle of condensed oxygen, so as to enable you not to inhale the atmosphere loaded with germs. In tones muffled by the need to speak within the mouth-piece you learn that to the left is a tubercular potato, its surface gray with the potencies of countless deaths. Near it the bacillus of rheumatism flourishes on the cut surface of the succulent beet beside the ruddy germs of specific disease. Scarlet fever infests this potato, diphtheria that. The new bacterium of pneumonia flourishes on a boiled watermelon, and glanders, cholera, smallpox, and hydrophobia spread in tiny greenish growths over the little gardens of gelatin. For a moment, in my interest I displaced my mask. The Professor instantly seized me and hurried me from the room. 'What a risk!' he said; 'my last assistant did as you did, and died in seven days of acute phthisis with symptoms of hydrophobia and whooping-cough, combined in horrible equality.' I did not desire to re-enter this box of Pandora. In adjoining apartments of less size are the experimental cultivations, —those which are still in doubt. Among the most interesting is the micrococcus of gout, found to flourish best upon gelatinized turtle-soup.

"A most striking practical result has grown out of some of Coccischlächter's and Keimerzeuger's later researches. They have

been able to show that the bacterium of colic flourishes on the green apple, which accounts for the gripes experienced by youthful gourmands. But far more remarkable is the fact that certain micrococci and bacteria die, as proved by Coccischlächter, in some culture-materials and thrive, as shown by Keimerzeuger, on others. Thus the tubercle-bacilli flourish on boiled cabbage (Keimerzeuger), but perish on moist sauer-kraut (Coccischlächter); so that by a persistent diet of the latter article they have been able to saturate some of their devoted assistants up to the point of insusceptibility—a discovery which will, we trust, put an end to the cavils at the failure of these researches to yield practical results. . . . ."

In October, 1893, Dr. Hunt gave an address at St. Luke's Hospital, at Bethlehem, Pa., in which he related an incident which happened many years ago at the Pennsylvania Hospital, and which he always said was one of the most ludicrous he had met with, among many, in his long experience.

"Those of you," says Dr. Hunt, "who are familiar with the story of *Rab and his Friends* can fully realize the relations between the surgeon, the poor cancer-stricken patient, and the students. The author most touchingly and truthfully pictures scenes which are familiar in every general hospital. Sometimes these scenes are highly amusing in the midst of the tragedy.

"The idea of anything amusing in a hospital!

"I had occasion to amputate the thigh of a negro in the clinic. There was a large audience. I knew nothing of the previous history of the patient. The operation was over. The stump was sewed up, but not yet washed. I had on my apron, which was pretty well stained. The patient was let up out of the ether. Slowly he raised his head and took a deliberate view of the bloody stump, then, addressing me in a tragic voice: 'Be thy intents wicked or charitable?' 'Charitable,' I said. 'Thou comest in such a questionable shape,' and as he was being wheeled out of the room he called back, 'Hamlet, King, father, Royal Dane,' amidst the laughter and uproar of the class. He made a good recovery. Here the laughter was allowable; the farce succeeded the tragedy, the unconscious humor of the patient over his own case took away

for a moment the pity of it. I have known the highest tension of the operator relieved by some pleasantly whispered conceit of a bystander or assistant. So humor has a place even in a hospital. It is not always necessary to be 'dressed in an opinion of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit.'"

Early in October, 1886, Dr. Hunt, with Dr. Leidy and a number of Philadelphians, made a visit to Luray Cave and the Natural Bridge of Virginia. The object of the visit was to select and dedicate a column in the cave to Dr. Leidy. A preliminary tour was made of the cave by the party in order to select the column, after which the Natural Bridge was explored. The stalactite selected was very large, and, indeed, was said to be the largest in the world. On reaching the column in the cave Dr. Hunt, as chairman of the committee, made the following short address:

"This column and that stalactite in the caverns of Luray are dedicated to Professor Joseph Leidy. May they thus aid to perpetuate the name of one who, holding communion with the visible forms of nature, has so learned to interpret her grand simplicity that to hear him is to understand.

"From now on these objects will be known as the 'Leidy column' and the 'Leidy stalactite.'"

The scene as Dr. Leidy stepped to the front was an impressive one. He was surrounded by loving and admiring friends, and the dark shadows and fantastic images from the torch-lighted stalactites thrown over the party made a scene not soon to be forgotten. His voice trembled with emotion, but grew stronger as he proceeded to thank the company for the honor done him in naming one of nature's wonders after him, following his remarks by saying that monuments made of stone had never met his approval, but under such a monument he would gladly repose after his work was done.

With the exception of the attack of typhoid fever at the outset of his medical life, already mentioned, and the illness resulting from the injury received late in life, Dr. Hunt enjoyed exceptionally robust health. One curious fact, however, must not be overlooked —Dr. Hunt was extremely susceptible to certain bad odors, and was made ill promptly by them. In his article entitled "A Con-

tribution to the History of Toxæmia" he relates that "while remarkably sensitive to the effects of poisonous plants, such as the varieties of *rhus*, I have never yet had so much as an angry pustule arising from various scratches, punctures, and abrasions received from instruments and bony spicula while making dissections or performing operations," yet he was several times made seriously ill by effluvia or noxious emanations from the human body. In this article Dr. Hunt says "the train of symptoms was so exactly alike in the different attacks that I am sure that there can be no mistake as to the cause, and, as I do not remember to have read of similar cases, it may be well to record mine as a contribution to the history of blood-poisoning and as an illustration of the hazards of hospital and professional life." In later years Dr. Hunt was always exceedingly careful to avoid placing himself where he would be exposed to a recurrence of his former serious experience.

On March 4, 1887, Dr. Hunt met with a grave accident. While crossing the street in the early evening, he was knocked down and run over by some passing wagon and received an injury to the cervical vertebræ (which was then believed to be a fracture); also several scalp wounds and probably intracranial injuries. He was confined to bed for several months, and, his health having been greatly impaired, he subsequently went to Europe. At Baden-Baden he took a course of gymnastic treatment, by which he was benefited so much that he was able to resume to some degree the active duties of his profession upon his return home in the fall of that year. His experience at Baden-Baden was the subject of his widely read pamphlet on *Health Gymnastics at Baden-Baden*, Philadelphia, 1888. He went abroad again in 1889, and greatly enjoyed visiting the London hospitals. On his return home he continued in active practice until 1892, when, his health again being impaired, we spent a month together on a trip to Florida. One year later the effect of the injuries received in 1887 so disabled him that he was compelled finally to retire, and he also resigned the various positions in which he had been a zealous worker up to that time. He gradually declined in health, and died at his home, where he had lived for thirty-five years, at the southwest corner of Thirteenth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia,

on April 17, 1896, in the seventy-first year of his age. He was buried at Laurel Hill Cemetery.

In early life Dr. Hunt had been rather delicate and spare in figure, although of later years he grew quite stout as he became less active in habits. He was of average height; his face was generally ruddy and constantly wore a pleasing expression; his features were attractive and regular, although not finely cut. His eyes were blue and most intelligent, often twinkling with mirth. He was brimful of jokes and made ready puns. We all remember with pleasure, and were ready to hear, "Hunt's stories," which were very often based on trivial incidents occurring in his personal experience. He was an attractive and instructive lecturer, a judicious and safe operator, and considered a consultant of excellent judgment. His thorough knowledge of anatomy, which he loved profoundly, together with his clear perception and extensive clinical experience, coupled with a pre-eminently conservative nature, all combined to make him a successful surgeon.

Dr. Hunt was also fond of general literature, and, having an excellent memory, he retained what he read. In his writings he had not only a good English style, but also one eminently characteristic. He perfectly mastered the German language, which he spoke fluently.

Dr. Hunt was an intense lover of nature and quite an amateur botanist. During his summer journeyings he studied flowers, and especially wild flowers, and he gave great pleasure to those about him in demonstrating those beauties of plant-growth, which, perhaps, scarcely visible to the unaided eye, could be easily recognized through the small but powerful lens which he always carried in his vest-pocket.

Dr. Hunt had a kind and cheering word for all, rich or poor, with whom he came in contact; especially was this so with the patients of the hospital wards, many of whom came to him after their recovery to express their gratitude, often tendering him, with their thanks, some trifling object. No one ever heard Dr. Hunt speak harshly; but his was a kindly way with everyone, and it was this natural, gentle, assuring manner that made him so welcome by the sick-bed and in the wards of the hospitals. He was a wise

counsellor and an honest man in every relation of life; he was esteemed and beloved by all who had the privilege of his friendship, and all who knew him will bear testimony to his retiring, modest, unselfish, and noble character.

Although averse to forms and ceremonials, and not what is commonly known as a churchman, yet Dr. Hunt was a consistent believer in the principles and tenets held by the members of the Society of Friends, with whom he always affiliated. The following brief but comprehensive declaration of faith was recently found among his papers, in his own handwriting:

God, I acknowledge Thee;
As in the driven leaves of the autumn's morn,
So in the thunder of the battle's storm,
Source of my faith, I acknowledge Thee;
Father, bless Thou me.

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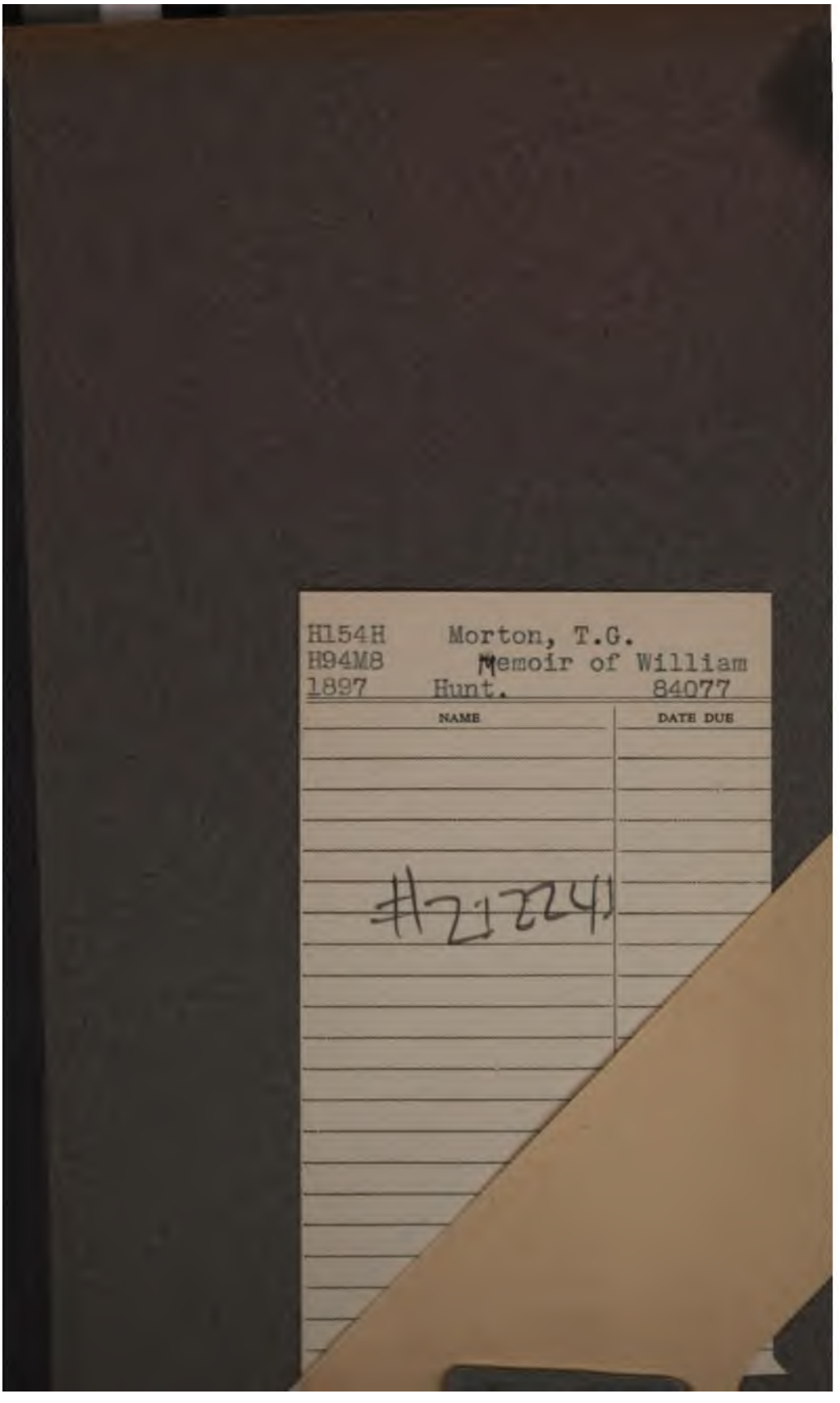
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